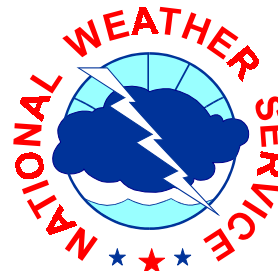


**NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE
WESTERN REGION
SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH**



MARCH 19, 2002

REGIONAL DIRECTOR

Western Region Says Good-Bye to a Distinguished Leader: On March 30, 2002, Western Region will bid a "retirement" farewell to an outstanding individual, Glenn Rasch. After 30 years of dedicated service, Glenn will retire. During his tenure, he has become well known across the agency for his systems, maintenance, and facilities expertise. He has often volunteered to take on extra projects and tasks to benefit the entire agency.

When Glenn left the Air Force in June of 1970, he entered the University of Utah where he earned his Master's Degree in Meteorology. While in graduate school, Glenn worked one summer as a student hire in Scientific Services Division (SSD). In 1972 following graduate school, he was hired by the NWS as a Met Intern in SSD where he worked in the Regional Warning Coordination Center (RWCC). In April 1975, he moved to the Development Division at NMC where he was a Research Meteorologist responsible for the global analysis system. In August 1978, he moved back to Salt Lake City as a Lead Forecaster at the Weather Service Forecast Office. He became the DMIC at Salt Lake City in 1980. In 1981, he was selected for the Deputy Chief of SSD under Len Snellman. In 1983, Glenn was selected as the SSD Division Chief following Len Snellman's retirement. In 1988, Glenn became Chief of Systems Operation Division.

Thanks, Glenn, for the support you provided me during the past three years and the support you have provided the region and agency for 30 years! We will miss you.

Meteorologist John Werth Honored at IMET Workshop in Boise! The annual Incident Meteorologist Workshop was held in Boise during the week of March 4, 2002. John Werth, meteorologist/IMET for more than 15 years, received special recognition from Western Region Headquarters for attaining a high level of performance and commitment to the fire weather program. John also received special recognition from his long-time friend and fellow IMET, Jim Prange. John recently decided to become more involved in aviation meteorology by moving to the CWSU in Auburn, WA. On behalf of Western Region and the NWS fire weather program, we greatly appreciate the many contributions John made during his time in the program and the personal sacrifices he made serving as an IMET. We will miss John in the fire weather program, however, the aviation program is gaining! I am sure John will do a fine job at the CWSU, and I wish him all the best.

WFO Missoula Predicts Major Winter Storm!!! Congratulations to WFO Missoula for an excellent job forecasting the most recent major winter storm, (ongoing as I write today March 20, 2002). A watch was issued Sunday, well in advance, notifying the citizens and media of the impending storm. As of the morning of March 20, most roads in their CWA were designated "emergency travel only". Thanks, Missoula, for fulfilling the NWS mission!

Visit to WFO Elko: I have visited all WFOs and RFCs in Western Region at least once during the past three years. I still have two CWSUs to go, Auburn and Fremont. My first WFO visit was to Elko, Nevada in March 1999. I decided it was time to go back. I spent a lot of time with individual staff members and the management team, visited the local dispatch office, and visited a local radio station. WFO Elko has a “marketing” team to spread the word about NWS and reach out to their local community. Congratulations to the staff, particularly their ASA Sue Packham, who convinced locals to display an ad for NWS on the back window of the town buses. It was a great visit, and I wish to express my appreciation for the staff’s work and preparation for my visit. Thanks!

DEPUTY REGIONAL DIRECTOR

Weather Support For Olympics and Paralympics Comes to a Close: The last forecast for the Olympics and Paralympics was issued on Saturday, March 16, 2002. And in keeping with the tradition of the Olympics and Paralympics this year, the Closing Ceremony was again a challenge with a cold front and snow approaching near the time of the final fireworks display. Thanks to another great forecast by the team, the fireworks went off at the end of the Closing Ceremony and about 1.5 hours later, the front came through with heavy snow. The weather support team comprised of meteorologists from the National Weather Service, the private sector, and the University of Utah did an outstanding job for both the Olympics and Paralympics. Tom Niziol, an Olympic forecaster from the NWS Buffalo office, summed it up this way, “we never considered ourselves as NWS forecasters and private sector forecasters, but instead we were a team of meteorologists doing the very best we could to provide accurate forecasts to all the customers.” The cooperation within the team could not have been better! Another very positive aspect of the teamwork was how well the communication system worked, with over 99.5% reliability during the entire Olympic period.

METEOROLOGICAL SERVICES DIVISION

STATEMENT OF THE WEEK: Winter hit western Montana with a prolonged and repeated blast during the first part of March. Winter storms affected WFO Missoula’s CWA for six days straight. The WFO issued a special weather statement and then a winter storm watch as early as Sunday, March 3, for the arctic front to move over the West Glacier Region early Tuesday the 5th, and then over the remainder of the CWA Wednesday into Thursday. The first warning was issued late Monday, with a lead time of 36 hours. Numerous advisories and warnings followed with excellent verification. Average snowfall accumulation for this event ranged from 6 to 8 inches in the northwest Montana valleys to near Missoula, to a foot or more in the Bitterroot Valley. Snow drifts up to a foot were reported in many valleys, with emergency travel on portions of Highway 2 near Essex and I-90 from Superior to Tarkio during the height of the storm. In Idaho, Grangeville and vicinity received around 6 inches with over a foot on Mt. Idaho. Two to three feet of snow fell over the mountains, with the heaviest amounts over the West Glacier and Bitterroot Mountains. Of the 21 warnings issued, eighteen verified with only one missed event. This week’s statement of the week is a watch issued 4 p.m. Monday by lead forecaster Eric Boldt. Good work Missoula!

March 19, 2002

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WWWWWUS45 KMSO 042304
WSWMSO

URGENT - WINTER WEATHER MESSAGE
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE MISSOULA MT
400 PM MST (300 PM PST) MON MAR 4 2002

MTZ002-050500-
WEST GLACIER REGION-
INCLUDING...SWAN LAKE

...HEAVY SNOW WARNING IS IN EFFECT FOR THE WEST GLACIER REGION OF
NORTHWEST MONTANA FOR TUESDAY...

SNOW IS EXPECTED TO DEVELOP IN NORTHWEST MONTANA TONIGHT AND
INCREASE NEAR THE CONTINENTAL DIVIDE EARLY ON TUESDAY.
ACCUMULATIONS OF 6 TO 12 INCHES WILL OCCUR BY TUESDAY AFTERNOON IN
THE WEST GLACIER REGION.

WEST WINDS 20 TO 35 MPH WILL SWITCH TO THE EAST TUESDAY MORNING
WHEN AN ARCTIC COLD FRONT MOVES OVER THE DIVIDE. THIS WILL RESULT IN
BLOWING AND DRIFTING SNOW...CREATING DIFFICULT DRIVING CONDITIONS.

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Fire Weather Program: The National Fire Weather Forecasters Course (S-591) and the 2002 National Incident Meteorologist Workshop was held in Boise, Idaho, February 25 through March 8. The S-591 course focused on lessons for the WFO Fire Weather Program Leader on policy changes with NWS directive 10-4, and also the latest fire weather research on the Haines Index and complex terrain meteorology. Forty-three students attended the Fire Weather Forecasters Course representing all six NWS regions.

Besides the annual IMET refresher training, the emphasis of the 2002 IMET Workshop was the new digital products, FX-Net (the next generation data acquisition system for IMETs), and lessons learned from recent fire accident investigations. Sixty-five IMETS and IMET trainees attended the workshop.

On April 2, the WR WFOs will switch to the new WMO and AWIPS headers for all their fire weather products. Each WFO is required to send a test Fire Weather Watch/Red Flag Warning (RFW) message before April 2. The test is needed to verify that the RFWs are reaching the WIMS and EMWIN systems.

CRS Voice Improvement (VIP) Update: All Western Region WFOs should install CRS version 8.0 shortly, if not already completed. The VIP computer should not be used until the upgraded VIP software is released. The new software will undergo field testing from March 26 through April 11, and is scheduled for implementation the week of April 15. At that time, WFOs should begin local dictionary adjustments and transmitting products using

the upgraded voice. The national goal is to try to get all products switched to the VIP voice by the end of May.

HYDROLOGICAL SERVICES DIVISION

Hydrologic Training Requests for FY03: The hydrology training requests for FY03 have been provided to the Field Requirements Group (FRG). In addition to requests for training slots in the current residence courses and for RFC workshops, several new training opportunities were requested for FY03.

Funds were requested for the development of a residence course to cover ensemble hydrologic forecasting. With the implementation of AHPS, training in this area is critical to ensuring that we can provide the best possible service. An advanced WFO Hydrologic Forecasting System (WHFS) course was also proposed. This course will provide instruction on the hydrology-related tools being added to WHFS, such as the Flash Flood Monitoring Program and Site Specific. Support for a Cold Region Hydrologic Workshop in FY03 was also requested. This workshop would be hosted by Central Region, HSD.

Findings from RFC Operations Team Survey: The RFC Operations Team has compiled and summarized the entries from their Web survey of WFO and RFC operational staff. You can find the summary at http://207.173.99.100/cnrfc/rfc_ops/.

CLIMATE SERVICES

First Climate Services Steering Committee Meeting: The first Climate Services Steering Committee will be held in Reno, April 4-5. The meeting will take place at WFO Reno and the Western Regional Climate Center. The purpose of this first meeting is to finalize the Steering Committee objectives, discuss current climate services at WR WFOs, prioritize the objectives, and develop an initial plan to "tackle" the objectives. Judy Koepsell from the Climate Services Division (OCWWS) will be attending the meeting to provide a national perspective on the NWS Climate Services Program. The Steering Committee will spend a half day visiting the Western Regional Climate Center. A summary of the meeting will be included in WR Staff Notes the week April 15.

SCIENTIFIC SERVICES DIVISION

Completion of NWP Module by March 31: Please remember that the COMET NWP module is a required training item for all forecasters (including CWSU Meteorologists and RFC HAS). The deadline for completion is March 31, 2002.

WR SOO/DOH Workshop: WR/SSD will be hosting the WR SOO/DOH Workshop in Boulder this year. The dates are May 14-16, 2002. The focus of the meeting is WES, IFPS, and the winter weather/high winds GPRA goals.

SOO/DOH Professional Development and Training Report: It is time again to provide SSD with the bi-annual WR SOO/DOH reports. Please prepare the Training Report for the period October 1 to March 31 and the Training Plan for the period April 1 to September 30. The due date is April 10, 2002.

There were a few format changes agreed to during the May 2001 WR SOO/DOH Workshop. They are:

- (1) Only significant office PD&T accomplishments for an individual or team need to be included in the reports. IDPs are the place for personal goals and accomplishments. This report is only for office training accomplishments and goals.
- (2) The format will remain flexible and up to each office. This is no change from the current procedures.
- (3) Please send your report as an attachment to an email (WordPerfect is preferred). No hard copy is required, unless you use some unusual software or font arrangement. WR-SSD will assume that it was reviewed and cleared by your MIC/HIC.

New Technical Attachment: This week's Technical Attachment (TA) is entitled "A GFE-Based Temperature Verification at WFO Boise," and is authored by Les Colin, Weather Forecast Office, Boise, Idaho. The TA is located on the National Weather Service Web site at <http://www.wrh.noaa.gov>, under "Technical Attachments."

SYSTEMS OPERATIONS DIVISION

Release of New MMTS Display: NIMBUS, the new display for the max/min temperature system (MMTS), will be available for procurement within a month. These units are not to be used at historical sites until performance is evaluated to ensure no significant biases exist. These new displays will store data for 30 days and are ideal for stations which do not have weekend or holiday observers. Since only a limited supply will be initially available for distribution, each office needs to submit a list of all stations where they want to install the NIMBUS and a justification. WFOs are being asked to submit their needs to WR422 - Harold Knocke.

A Message From Glenn Rasch: Next week will be my last week as Chief of SOD in Western Region. I will be retiring effective March 30. I've had a great career in NWS for the past 30 years and especially as SOD Chief for the past 13 plus years. The people I have worked with have been great, and the work was always interesting. The hardest part about retiring is leaving behind such a top notch group of people. I want to thank everyone in Western Region and throughout NWS for the excellent support I have enjoyed, and for your friendship. I wish you all the very best. Until my replacement is selected, Jeff Walker will be Acting Chief of SOD. Please give Jeff the same great support you have given me.

Other Staffing Changes at WRH: Congratulations Greg Wallace and Duffy Johnson. Greg Wallace, WRH Electronics Systems Specialist has been selected for the WFO Salt Lake City ESA position. Thanks Greg for all of your excellent support over the last four years! Duffy Johnson, WFO Salt Lake City Electronics Technician has been selected for an IT Specialist position in WRH. Duffy will be working in SIB supporting WRH and WR information and electronics systems. Welcome aboard Duffy!

David Nordello recently came aboard as an IT Specialist at WRH. David comes to us from GSA and will be part of the SIB team supporting WR information systems. Welcome aboard David!

Miramar Radar Solar Project: Construction of the 10 kilowatt photovoltaic solar power system at the Miramar radar site near San Diego is completed. The system will be undergoing inspection and testing this week. Also, NWS staff will be trained at the radar site this week in operating and maintaining the system. An agreement between the local power company and NWS is undergoing review. The agreement must be approved before the solar system can be used operationally.

AWIPS 5.1.2 Upgrade Completed: All offices in the Western Region have completed the installation of AWIPS Release 5.1.2. The next milestone is for all sites to complete the installation of maintenance releases 5.1.2.1 and 5.1.2.2. Most sites are already at 5.1.2.2. Other planned changes to AWIPS this year include the upgrade to release 5.2.1, 5.2.2, testing and fielding of Linux-based Comms Processors (CP) to replace the HP-RT CPs, and the addition of Linux-based Pre-Processors (PP) to take on some of the AWIPS Data Server processing workload. CP/PP testing will occur in the spring and late summer at WFOs Portland, OR, Pendleton, OR, and Western Region Headquarters.